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ABSTRACT

This volume tells the story of the concerned adults who have come forward to mentor disadvantaged urban youth, one-on-one, in cities across the country. It illustrates what middle-class volunteers can do to ameliorate the conditions of young people living in poverty. Mentoring can complement government efforts and contribute to the broader revitalization of institutions. More than 300 interviews and the reflections of eight mentors anchor the discussion and convey the wide diversity of the mentoring experience. Mentoring is portrayed as a low-cost, high-yield solution to problems confronting young people. It is argued that volunteerism can save young people from their environments as it saves the American people from the evils of public institutions. In addition, volunteer mentors serve as catalysts for social action on a broader scale. The underlying aspect is one of community, as mentoring brings people together across generation, race, and class. (SLD)

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